



# COMMUNITY NEWS

Via Linda District

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## Traffic Accidents: Number 1 Killer of Teens

Thinking back, it is not too difficult to remember the excitement and liberation that came with obtaining a driver's license. As exciting as this new freedom may be for a teen, studies have shown that the first six months after getting a license is the most dangerous period of time for any driver. Sadly, automobile accidents are more common among young drivers, than any other age group.

- Every year over 5,000 teens between the ages of 16 and 20 are fatally injured in a car accident.
- About 400,000 drivers in this same age group will be seriously injured.
- The risk of being involved in a car accident is higher for drivers 16 to 19 years old than it is for any other age group. Teen drivers between the ages of 16 and 19 are about four times more likely to crash than older more experienced drivers.

According to a study conducted by the American Automobile Association (AAA) approximately 31,000 fatalities over the past 10 years resulted from accidents that involved teen drivers between 15 and 17 years of age. For comparison purposes, that number is a little more than half of the total number of U.S. soldiers who lost their lives during the entire Vietnam War.

One third of those [31,000] killed were the teenage drivers themselves, another third were passengers riding with them and the last third were occupants of other cars or pedestrians.

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## From The Desk Of Commander Burl Haenel

With Veteran's Day having just passed, I would like to say "thank you" to all who served and continue to serve our Country in the armed services. We look forward to this time of year as the beginning of the holiday season and as the time when many of our annual visitors return to the area for our sunny weather.

With an increased population comes some additional concerns. Lately, we have seen a rise in what we call "distraction burglaries". These burglaries are those where the victim is distracted by one individual while another is stealing from them. It may seem very innocent at the time: people looking for work; landscapers trying to drum up business; solicitors trying to sell security services; or even you trying to sell your car and showing it to a prospective buyer.

If you're not expecting someone, or if you didn't initiate the contact, don't let these people in your home. Conduct any non-solicited contact for work, such as landscaping or painting, outside your home. Make sure someone is present with an estimator wherever they travel on your property. You can always increase your peace of mind by contacting the Better Business Bureau and the Registrar of Contractors. Conduct any sales transactions, for cars and such, at a third party site.

For further information regarding distraction burglaries feel free to contact the Via Linda Crime Prevention Office at 480-312-5696

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AAA reports that teen drivers are the most dangerous group of motorists on the road - not only to themselves but to others as well.

The most deadly combination when it comes to teens behind the wheel is the addition of teenage friends in the vehicle. According to AAA, the risk of a fatal accident involving a teen driver more than doubles when there is a teenage passenger in the car and quintuples with the presence of two or more teen passengers.

Here are some quick tips to keep our young drivers safe.

- **Set the example:** Practice what you preach. Don't eat, text or talk on the cell phone while you are driving and always wear your seatbelt. Never speed or tailgate, and don't drive while tired or angry. Your teens have been watching you drive for their entire life. If you have had bad habits in the past, use them as teaching points and start using good ones.
- **Practice:** Allow as much supervised driving as possible.
- **NO passengers for at least 6 months:** Until you are certain that your teen can handle passengers and other distractions safely, provide adult supervision when passengers are present and your teen is driving.
- **Daytime driving for at least 6 months:** Studies have shown that the risk of a teen being in an accident increases at night.
- **Wait on buying teens their own car:** Share the family car for the first year or so, so you can control access to it. This way you can determine the conditions of use.
- **Teach how to "Scan" for hazards:** During practice with your teen driver, remind them to look at traffic - not only several cars ahead - but side to side as well. Have them look for brake lights, traffic signals, debris in the roadway, pedestrians and emergency vehicles.
- **Education about Speed vs. Stopping Distance:** Quite simply, the faster you are going the longer it is going to take for your vehicle to come to a stop. Teach them to leave the appropriate amount of space between their vehicle and a vehicle stopped in front of them. This practice will help avoid a second collision in the event they are struck from behind.

In conclusion, wearing a seat belt is still the most effective thing we can *all* do to save lives and reduce injuries should one be involved in an accident.

(Teen driving continued)

Failure to wear a seat belt contributes to more fatalities than any other safety-related behavior, and studies suggest that males ages 16 to 25 are the age group least likely to buckle up. Help them make using a seatbelt a habit during supervised practice time.

Speeding greatly increases every driver's chance of being involved in an accident as driver reaction time is considerably reduced. In addition, the law of physics dictates that the higher the speed at the time of impact, the more severe the damage and the more severe the resulting injury.

Distractions such as cell phones and radios can create risky driving conditions, especially for new drivers. Know who your teen is riding with when you are not providing their transportation. Be sure to practice what you preach, and be the driving role model the teen driver in your life deserves - it may save a life.

For more information on crime prevention or additional opportunities to get involved in YOUR community contact Crime Prevention Officer Kory Sneed at 480-312-5696 or [ksneed@scottsdaleaz.gov](mailto:ksneed@scottsdaleaz.gov), or District 3 Police Aide Terri Terlazzo at 480-312-8292 or [tterlazzo@scottsdaleaz.gov](mailto:tterlazzo@scottsdaleaz.gov).

### Upcoming Events

**Drug Collection for Destruction – December 2, 2009**  
**8-10 a.m. – Via Linda Senior Center**  
**11-1:00 p.m. – Granite Reef Senior Center**

Bring expired and/or unwanted over-the-counter and prescription drugs in their original containers to either location at the listed times, and we will destroy them in an environmentally safe manner.

**Packages from Home: 11/11/09 – 11/25/09**

Bring items to be shipped to soldiers for Christmas to any of the Police Districts. For a complete listing of acceptable items visit: [www.packagesfromhome.org](http://www.packagesfromhome.org)

**Note:** All city offices will be closed on Thurs & Fri for Thanksgiving

### Public Safety Community Contact Numbers and E-mail Links

- **Scottsdale Police Non-Emergency** 480-312-5000
- **Scottsdale Fire Department** 480-312-8000
- **SPD Drug Enforcement Hotline** - Suspected illegal activity, 480-312-TIPS (Hot lines are not monitored)
- **SPD Traffic Enforcement Hotline** - chronic traffic problems, 480-312-CARS
- **Code Enforcement** 480-312-2546
- **Child Safety Seat Installation** 480-312-BABY
- **CPR/First Aid Classes** 480-312-1817